

Page 2, line 28, please insert the following heading:

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Page 3, line 19, please insert the following heading:

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Page 4, line 24, please insert the following heading:

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Amended) A method of desalinating water in a plurality of stages comprising membrane module units, wherein permeate water from a first stage membrane module unit is supplied to a second stage membrane module unit to obtain desalinated water therefrom, the method comprising:

processing at least a portion of a feed water having a total salt concentration of 3.0 to 4.8% by weight and a calcium ion concentration of 200 to 500 mg/l, wherein said at least a portion of the feed water is treated with the first stage membrane module unit to obtain the permeate water, said permeate water being optionally mixed with an additional portion of the feed water to produce a second stage intake water, the second stage intake water having a total salt concentration of about 55 to 90% of that of the feed water and a calcium ion concentration of about 95% or less of that of the feed water; and

supplying the second stage intake water to the second stage membrane module unit, thereby obtaining the desalinated water.